

LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE TO PRESENT READINGS OF TWO NEW PLAYS DEVELOPED THROUGH MILITARY OUTREACH PROGRAMS

VETERANS WRITING WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT SHAIRI ENGLE'S PIECE HONORED WITH ARTS IN THE ARMED FORCES' PRESTIGIOUS BRIDGE AWARD, CHOSEN BY FINAL SELECTING JUDGE TONY KUSHNER

PLAYHOUSE TO CONTINUE MILITARY OUTREACH INITIATIVES FOR 2019/20 SEASON

La Jolla, CA – La Jolla Playhouse announces readings of two new plays developed through the institution's military outreach initiatives. *Radioman*, by James McManus, will take place on Sunday, July 21 at 6:30pm, and *Tampons, Dead Dogs and Other Disposable Things*, by San Diego-based Air Force veteran and Veterans Playwriting Workshop alumna Shairi Engle, will take place on Monday, August 19 at 7:00pm. The readings will take place in the Forum Theatre. Reservations are free but reservations are required by visiting LaJollaPlayhouse.org.

Radioman, presented in partnership with San Diego Rep and directed by UC San Diego Assistant Professor Vanessa Stallings, is based on interviews with Vietnam vets from Humboldt County and others, who came together to build an exact replica Abraham Lincoln's funeral hearse for a celebration commemorating the 250th anniversary of his death. With only a single faded photo of the hearse as a guide, their task seemed insurmountable. But at the Blue Ox Mill in the middle of the Redwoods, this group of volunteer vets decided to tackle the impossible head on. In the process they found healing and faith in themselves and each other.

Tampons, Dead Dogs and Other Disposable Things follows Jen as she gets lost in the desert in an effort to find herself whole again following a traumatic childhood event. On a literal and metaphysical excursion to overcome debilitating PTSD, Jen's voyage pushes her to the limits of sanity, healing and forgiveness.

Engle's play recently won the 2019 Arts in the Armed Forces' (AITAF) prestigious [Bridge Award](#), which recognizes "an emerging playwright of exceptional talent within the United States military." The work was praised in an announcement made in May by AITAF Founder and award-winning actor **Adam Driver** and was chosen by final selecting judge and Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright **Tony Kushner**, who called the piece a "tough, disturbing, enraging, consistently surprising, smart, very funny and ultimately moving and revelatory play."

Engle has also been commissioned to write one of the 10-minute plays for the Playhouse's upcoming production of *Written in Stone* for the 2019 **Without Walls Festival** in October.

"We are incredibly proud that Shairi, a member of our first Veterans Playwriting Workshop cohort, has received this prestigious honor," said **Playhouse Managing Director Debby Buchholz**. "The Playhouse is deeply committed to engaging with the military community through a variety of initiatives. These programs are at the core of our mission of making theatre accessible to new and diverse communities in our region, and we are pleased to offer an expanding roster of theatre activities for San Diego military personnel, families and veterans."

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The Playhouse will begin the second cohort of its **Veterans Playwriting Workshop** in the fall, offering veterans the opportunity to develop their playwriting skills and techniques for writing their own short play. Participants take part in a 12-week session with professional development and training led by La Jolla Playhouse Artistic staff and Teaching Artists, along with guidance from UC San Diego MFA Playwriting candidates. They are introduced to various styles of plays and playwrights while exploring their own writing styles with different writing prompts. Cohort members also have opportunities to see productions at La Jolla Playhouse and other local theatres. The next workshop will meet weekly from October 15 through December 2 at the Playhouse. For more information and/or an application, please contact community@ljp.org.

In addition to the Veterans Playwriting Workshops, La Jolla Playhouse offers a series of programs and performances to help provide theatre experiences for veterans, military families and military personnel throughout the year. These programs include **Military Date Nights**, offering complimentary tickets to every Playhouse season production. Many Military Date Nights include pre- and/or post-show activities, such as live music, food trucks and artistic chats. More than 500 members of the military community attend these special events each year. Upcoming Military Date Nights for the 2019/2020 season include **August 23** for *The Coast Starlight* and **September 13** for *Kiss My Aztec!*.

The Playhouse will host a special **Military Family Day**, including free tickets, food and post-show activities, on **February 22** in conjunction with the new musical *Fly*. Military families are also offered free performances of the Playhouse's annual [Performance Outreach Program \(POP\) Tour](#), the Playhouse's signature education program that travels throughout San Diego County, touring a world-premiere, Playhouse-commissioned work to schools, libraries, military bases and community centers each year, including those that serve students who are part of military families, such as Dewey Elementary, MCAS Miramar and Wolf Canyon Elementary. Other military outreach programs for children include scholarships for students in military families to participate in the Playhouse's annual [Young Performers at La Jolla Playhouse \(YP@LJP\)](#) summer theatre training programs.

The Playhouse has also been a [Blue Star Theatre](#) member since 2011, and through this national program run by the Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the Playhouse offers discounted \$25 tickets to active duty military, spouses and children. The Playhouse partners regularly with **VetTix** as well to offer complimentary tickets to various productions throughout the season. For more information on the Playhouse's military outreach programs, please visit lajollaplayhouse.org/support/transform-lives/

Funding for the Playhouse's military outreach programs is generously provided by **The James Irvine Foundation, The David C. Copley Foundation, Stella Artois, Holland America Line, The Spielman Family**, along with hundreds of individual Playhouse donors.

La Jolla Playhouse is a place where artists and audiences come together to create what's new and next in the American theatre, from Tony Award-winning productions, to imaginative programs for young audiences, to interactive experiences outside our theatre walls. Founded in 1947 by Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire and Mel Ferrer, the Playhouse is currently led by Tony Award winner Christopher Ashley, the Rich Family Artistic Director of La Jolla Playhouse, and Managing Director Debby Buchholz. The Playhouse is internationally renowned for the development of new plays and musicals, including mounting 102 world premieres, commissioning 52 new works, and sending 32 productions to Broadway – including the currently-running hit musical *Come From Away* – garnering a total of 38 Tony Awards, as well as the 1993 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre. LaJollaPlayhouse.org.

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